

VZCZCXRO4477  
OO RUEHPA  
DE RUEHNM #0090/01 0481603  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 171603Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
TO RUEHBP/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE 0478  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4846  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 3477  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0780  
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
RHMFIUU/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 NIAMEY 000090

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W, AF/RSA AND DRL/EA  
PARIS FOR AF WATCHER  
PLEASE PASS TO USAID AFR/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/17/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [PTER](#) [SCUL](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [ML](#) [NG](#)  
SUBJECT: NIGER TO HOST PEACE FORUM ON THE NORTH

REF: A. 08 NIAMEY 1116  
[1](#)B. USDAO NIAMEY IIR 6 928 0017 09

NIAMEY 00000090 001.2 OF 004

Classified By: Ambassador Bernadette M. Allen, Reasons: Section 1.4 b/d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The Government of Niger (GON) plans to host a Peace Forum to address continuing instability in the north of Niger and Mali on February 25 -27 in Niamey. The event will gather roughly 80 government and civil society leaders to discuss how best to deal with underlying causes of conflict in the north of each country, with indigenous ethnic groups invited to participate. The forum spins off an October 2008 Economic Support Fund (ESF)-financed, U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP)-facilitated workshop on the prevention and management of conflict (Ref A), and it is encouraging to learn of the potential fruit that the USIP activity may bear. The forum, to occur in the month that marks the two-year anniversary of the current conflict in Niger, comes at an important juncture -- the start of an election year. End summary.

-----  
Peace Forum to Take Place in Niamey on Feb. 25-27  
-----

[1](#)2. (C) On February 16, Ambassador Allen (accompanied by DCM Whitaker) met with the High Commission for the Restoration of Peace (HCRP) Commissioner Mohamed Anacko to inquire about a Peace Forum that Anacko is organizing to take place in Niamey from February 25-27, regarding northern Niger and Mali. The event will gather together parliamentarians, governors, mayors, traditional leaders, elders, clerics, tribal chieftains, and civil society and nongovernmental (NGO) representatives to include Tuareg, Arab, Toubou, Songhai/Zarma, and Fulani/Peulh participation.

-----  
Event Seeks to End Hostilities, Consolidate Peace  
-----

[1](#)3. (C) Anacko reported that GON President Tandja and GON Minister of Interior (MOI) Albade support the initiative. MOI Albade is expected to open the event. The first day, work will consist of plenary sessions; the second and third

days will involve working groups focusing on specific issues (such as ending conflict, smuggling, banditry and other criminal acts of common concern). The event seeks to: get armed groups to cease hostilities and lay down their arms; assist armed groups in returning to civil society; and consolidating peace throughout the sub-region.

-----  
ESF-Funded, USIP-Facilitated Workshop Event Catalyst  
-----

14. (C) Anacko said that the Peace Forum had its origins in the October 2008 Prevention and Management of Conflict workshop facilitated by the USIP held at Park W in Tapoa (Ref A). The participants in the ESF-financed workshop met shortly after the event, and decided to pursue a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the troubled North; many planned or are participants in the Peace Forum. After the meeting, Anacko proposed the concept to President Tandja, who agreed and delegated Anacko with the task of organizing and holding the event, provided it remained a Niger-Mali event, excluding outsiders (he specifically cited Algeria and Libya) from the discussions. Anacko does expect to invite in-country GON partner senior representation (i.e., United States, Canada, European Union, France) to the event, opening ceremony. Realizing that many of the issues involved in underlying discontent in Niger were common to Mali, the event planners discussed the proposal with Malian counterparts, who agreed to participate during the course of meetings of a working-level committee, with Mali to send approximately 15 participants.

-----  
Engaging Experienced Hands; Outreach Activities Planned  
-----

NIAMEY 00000090 002.2 OF 004

-----  
15. (C) Anacko suggested that the Peace Forum will essentially be a multi-phase activity. He added that he has invited former High Commissioners, retired senior military leaders, to participate so that they could share the benefits of their previous experiences in maintaining peace. Following the event, Peace Forum participants will form working groups to engage in outreach activities to armed groups and the communities affected by conflict, smuggling and other destabilizing activities. Working groups are to report findings that will be shared with Nigerien President Tandja and Malian President Toure. Anacko then hopes to hold meetings in a neutral country; he cited as a possibility Senegal (and specifically noted that Paris and a few other locations may not be workable because some insurgency leaders reside in those places). The outreach and follow-on activities would take place over one to two months, commencing as soon as two weeks after the Peace Forum. Anacko provided a background document explaining the rationale for the event, and soliciting \$140,000 for the Peace Forum, outreach activities, and a 4x4 vehicle. He also provided the list of likely Peace Forum participants. He reported that Canada and the European Union will fund some of the forum. (Note: In addition to the USIP training, the U.S. Government can take some credit for helping the HCRP become a better organized, more efficient operation as a result of a \$19,000 grant from the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) Public Diplomacy (PD) allocation provided to HCRP in the form of computer equipment (workstations, printers) and internet connectivity in March 2008. End note.)

-----  
Peace Forum Participants  
-----

16. (SBU) The list of the 79 proposed Peace Forum participants is as follows:

a. Agadez Component Based in Niamey:

Issoufou Bako - Minister of Environment and the Fight Against Desertification  
Syad Kato - Minister of Animal Resources  
Mohamed AKotey - former Minister of Environment and the Fight Against Desertification  
Birgi Raffini - National Assembly Deputy  
Mano Agali - National Assembly Deputy  
National Assembly Deputy from Bilma (unnamed)  
Assayad Sidi Mohamed - National Assembly Deputy  
Cherfi Rabidine - National Assembly Deputy  
Mahmoud Sinad - National Assembly Deputy  
Mohamed Anacko - High Commissioner for the Restoration of Peace  
Amadou Laouel Edmond - Community leader  
Akoli Daouel - Community leader  
Dr. Issouf Agarya - Advisor in the Office of the Presidency  
Ali Sidi Adam - Advisor in the Office of the Presidency

b. Agadez Region:

Ousmane Amadou - Community leader  
Mouloul Wamichikane - Community leader  
Abdallah Illias - Mayor of Gougaram  
Azara Mamadou - (unspecified)  
Silimane Hyard = former rebel commander  
Hadji Ahmaya - Religious leader  
Adam Efanguel - Mayor of Tabelot  
Mayor of Dirkou - (unnamed)  
Hassane - Advisor, High Commission of Local Governments, from Fachi  
Madame Kadi Francois - Women,s Association of Agadez  
Ismaguel Nour - former rebel commander  
Abba Malam Boukar - Governor of Agadez Region  
Elhadj Biki - Tuareg chieftain  
Ahmed Wadde - former rebel commander  
Colonel Elias Almahadi - Community leader

NIAMEY 00000090 003.2 OF 004

Malfo Akano - former mayor  
Anastafided - Tuareg chieftain

c. Diffa Region:

Issa Lamine - Minister of Public Health  
Lamido Moumouni Harouna - Minister of Equipment  
Mahadi Moumoune - Community leader  
Ahmadou Kanta - Fulani Chieftain  
Community leader from Agadem (unnamed)

d. Zinder Region:

Hamid Algabit - President, High Council of Local Governments  
Bazoum Mohamed - National Assembly Deputy

e. Niamey:

Mamane Oumarou - National mediator  
Nouhou Arzika - Mouvement Citoyen (Citizens, Movement ) a civil society body)  
Sanoussi Tambari Jackou - National Assembly Deputy  
Dr. Bague Hima - ANDDH (Association Nigerienne des Droits de l'Homme)  
Dr. Gandou Zakara - ODLH (Organisation pour le Defense des Libertes Humaines)  
Antarou Hassane - National Assembly Deputy  
General Seyni Garba - former High Commissioner  
Colonel Hamidou Maigari - former High Commissioner  
Colonel Sofiani Amadou - former High Commissioner  
Mme. Benbello Agnes - Association des Femmes (Women,s Association)  
Prof. Djibo Hamani - University of Niamey  
Dr. El Back Adam - University of Niamey  
Ewanguy Mohamed - former rebel combatant  
Mme. Abdoul Wahab Aichatou - Association des Femmes (Women,s

Association)

f. Tahoua Region:

Goumour Ibrahim - former rebel commander  
Mohamed Abdoulahi - Minister of Mines and Energy  
Ikta Mohamed - former rebel commander  
Alhadi Alhadj - former rebel commander  
Hamed Ahmed Halilou - former rebel commander  
Ousseini Bilal - former rebel commander  
Ali Abdourahamane - National Assembly Deputy  
Nation Assembly Deputy from Tassara (unnamed)  
Colonel Alhassane Mohamed - former rebel combatant

g. Mali Delegation:

Mme. Halimatou Sothar  
Safo Kabangou  
Mme. Niantao Simone  
Dr. Diallo Deydiya  
Dr. Mariam Djibrilla Maiga  
Iyad Agali  
Mohamed Intala  
Aroudeiny Ag Hamatou  
Mme. Honkri  
(plus 6 participants to be named)

-----  
Comment  
-----

17. (C) Anacko emphasized that he discussed with President Tandja the toll that Niger's two-year conflict has taken on the population (especially in Agadez) in casualties, a loss of tourism revenue and related jobs, and reduced access to one-half of Niger due to the state of emergency placed on the Agadez region for the past 18 months. The revelation of a peace forum on the North comes as most welcome news, particularly as it lays a foundation for this year's local and national elections.

Minimize considered.

NIAMEY 00000090 004.2 OF 004

ALLEN